

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Chile

SUBJECT Confusion Within the Chilean Communist Party

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1. The reorganization of the leadership of the Communist Party of Chile (PCCh) has been marked by confusion over the political line to be followed as well as the orders to be carried out. At present there is no effective direction of Party affairs.
2. Shortly after the 6 March elections, the Regional Committee of Santiago queried the Secretariat of the Party on the form which the defense of Frente Nacional Democratico (FND) candidates should take, and on what line the Party will follow after 21 May. The Regional Committee has been told only that "something" is being planned for 1 May, but no advance instructions have been given.
3. The provincial organizations also have no effective leadership, and what instructions they receive from Santiago are delayed and contradictory. During the recent electoral campaign, El Pueblo printed the supposed Party line, which then was contradicted by the Party. In one instance El Pueblo stated that the FND was withdrawing its candidates in certain sections and would throw its support to the FRAS candidates. This statement was never confirmed by the PCCh directorate, and on the day of the election the Communist voters were still uncertain what action was expected of them. As a result, FRAS candidates lost by only a few votes, when they could have won had proper instructions been given.
4. Another example of lack of coordination between Santiago and the provinces cited by source was the campaign of Marmaduke Grove. When Communist Senator Guillermo Guevara was sent by the Party to direct Grove's campaign, he found that the Party had no votes in Copiapo and Coquimbo. When he informed headquarters of the situation, he was merely told "to proceed". The Party candidate received only 500 votes, although Guevara had been assured in Santiago that there were 3000 votes available in the region if he would work on the laborers. The regional directors have been extremely disturbed over the situation, and they claim that the orders from Santiago were absurd and given in either bad faith or ignorance. Source states that similar instances occurred in almost every province.

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5. No further instructions have been given for the General Congress originally scheduled for April. These congresses are usually held in May, but are always prepared well in advance. If the Congress were held before 21 May, Carlos Contreras Labarca could attend as a senator, but upon the expiration of his term on that date, his only chance of attending would be as delegate of his commune.
6. The removal of Contreras Labarca from the Political Commission* has not been well received in some circles, but no cell or local committee has made any formal protest. The cell members hesitate to take a step censuring the actions of the directorate, about which they know little. Contreras Labarca was required to make a statement professing his faith in the Party and its leaders, and this statement was mimeographed and circulated throughout the cells.

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* cf. [REDACTED]

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